

Amendments to the Claims

1 – 46. (canceled)

47. (presently amended) A method for determining whether an agent modulates a Mdm2-herpesvirus-associated ubiquitin-specific protease (HAUSP) interaction, comprising the steps of:

(a) obtaining or generating an *in vitro* system comprising Mdm2 and HAUSP;

(b) contacting the *in vitro* system with a candidate agent; and

(c) determining whether the candidate agent increases or decreases a level of Mdm2-HAUSP protein complex interaction in the *in vitro* system,

wherein determination of an increase or decrease the level of Mdm2-HAUSP protein complex interaction in (c) indicates that the agent modulates Mdm2-HAUSP interaction.

48. (presently amended) The method of claim 47, wherein the determining in step (c) comprises comparing the level of Mdm2-herpesvirus-associated ubiquitin-specific protease (HAUSP) protein complex interaction in the *in vitro* system of step (b) with a level of Mdm2-HAUSP protein complex interaction in a second *in vitro* system comprising Mdm2 and HAUSP in the absence of the candidate agent, wherein determination of an increase or decrease of the level of Mdm2-HAUSP protein complex interaction in the *in vitro* system of step (b) compared to the second *in vitro* system indicates that the agent modulates Mdm2-HAUSP interaction.

49 – 53. (canceled)

54. (presently amended) A method for determining whether an agent is reactive with Mdm2, comprising the steps of:

(a) contacting a candidate agent with Mdm2, in the presence of herpesvirus-associated ubiquitin-specific protease (HAUSP); and

(b) determining whether the candidate agent inhibits Mdm2-HAUSP protein complex formation interaction,

wherein determination of inhibition of Mdm2-HAUSP protein complex formation interaction in (b) compared to Mdm2-HAUSP protein complex formation interaction in the absence of the agent indicates that the agent is reactive with Mdm2.

55 – 56. (canceled)

57. (presently amended) A method for determining whether an agent is reactive with herpesvirus-associated ubiquitin-specific protease (HAUSP), comprising the steps of:

(a) contacting a candidate agent with HAUSP, in the presence of Mdm2; and

(b) determining whether the candidate agent inhibits HAUSP-Mdm2 protein complex formation interaction,

wherein determination of inhibition of Mdm2-HAUSP protein complex formation interaction in (b) compared to Mdm2-HAUSP protein complex formation interaction in the absence of the agent indicates that the agent is reactive with HAUSP.

58 – 60. (canceled)

61. (canceled)

62. (presently amended) A method for determining whether an agent modulates Mdm2-herpesvirus-associated ubiquitin-specific protease (HAUSP) interaction, comprising the steps of:

(a) obtaining or generating a first in vitro system comprising Mdm2 and HAUSP, and a second *in vitro* system comprising Mdm2 and HAUSP;

(b) contacting the first ~~in-vitro~~ system with a candidate agent;

(c) contacting the second ~~in-vitro~~ system with (i) the candidate agent and (ii) an antibody, or fragment thereof, that specifically binds Mdm2; and

(c) determining a level of HAUSP activity in the first system and the second system, wherein determination of an increase or decrease of HAUSP activity in the first ~~in vitro~~ system compared to the second ~~in vitro~~ system indicates that the agent modulates Mdm2-HAUSP interaction.

63. (presently amended) A method for determining whether an agent modulates Mdm2-herpesvirus-associated ubiquitin-specific protease (HAUSP) interaction, comprising the steps of:

(a) obtaining or generating a first in vitro system comprising Mdm2 and HAUSP, and a second *in vitro* system comprising Mdm2 and HAUSP;

(b) contacting the first ~~in vitro~~ system with a candidate agent;

(c) contacting the second ~~in vitro~~ system with (i) the candidate agent and (ii) an antibody, or fragment thereof, that specifically binds HAUSP; and

(c) determining a level of Mdm2 activity in the first system and the second system, wherein determination of an increase or decrease of Mdm2 activity in the first ~~in vitro~~ system compared to the second ~~in vitro~~ system indicates that the agent modulates Mdm2-HAUSP interaction.

64. (new) The method of claim 54 or 57, further comprising the steps of:

(c) contacting a cell with the candidate agent, wherein the cell comprises Mdm2, herpesvirus-associated ubiquitin-specific protease (HAUSP), or p53; and

(d) determining whether the agent activates or increases, or inhibits or decreases, one or more Mdm2-associated, HAUSP-associated, or p53-associated biological events in the cell, compared to a cell not contacted with the candidate agent.